

Issue Brief—New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD)

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), adopted by African Heads of State and Government in Nigeria in October 2001, is an agenda set by African leaders to eradicate poverty through sustainable growth and development and through active participation in multilateral fora. It is an initiative that signals to the international community that African leaders are serious and committed to sustainable development and that they welcome partnership and support in Africa's development efforts. NEPAD is a key agenda item for the June 2002 G-8 Summit and has received considerable attention by the World Trade Organization (WTO), U.K., France and Canada lately, with Canada committing \$500 million to NEPAD. It is likely that when African leaders meet with President Bush on February 26 they will seek support for NEPAD.

NEPAD is a comprehensive framework for the socioeconomic development of Africa.¹ NEPAD provides a vision for African development, a statement of the problems facing the continent, and an action plan to resolve these problems. It is an integrated development plan designed by African leaders that addresses key social, economic and political priorities.² NEPAD has seven main initiatives:

- Peace, Security, Democracy and Political Governance;
- Economic and Corporate Governance;
- Infrastructure;
- Human Resource Development;
- Capital Flows;
- Market Access;

- Environment.

Through NEPAD, African leaders are signaling to African people and to the international community that Africa is committed to achieving sustainable growth and development. It is also a commitment by African leaders to accelerate the global economic integration of the African continent. NEPAD is as much a framework for the development of Africa as a call to the rest of the world to partner with and aid in the development of Africa.

NEPAD was initiated by South African President Thabo Mbeki, Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade, Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. It is led by an executive committee comprised of representatives from 15 African states.³ NEPAD's secretariat is in South Africa with an Executive Director, Wiseman Nkuhlu, from the same country.

¹ For more detailed information and documents on NEPAD, see www.africaninitiative.org.

² NEPAD is a merger of the Millennium Partnership for Africa's Recovery Program (MAP) and the Omega Plan. The merger resulted in a broad policy document entitled the New Africa Initiative (NAI), which was later renamed NEPAD. The NAI was approved by the OAU Summit Heads of State and Government on July 11, 2001 and its policy framework forms the basis of NEPAD.

³ The Executive Committee is comprised of representatives from Cameroon, Gabon, Sao Tome and Principe, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Rwanda, Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia, Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal.

Goals of NEPAD

NEPAD is designed to identify constraints and mobilize support for development, economic growth, and poverty reduction within Africa. By focusing on seven initiatives, NEPAD hopes to improve the investment environment for both domestic and foreign investors, which will in turn help to realize the vast economic potential of the continent.

NEPAD has set an ambitious target of achieving and sustaining an average gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate in Africa of over 7 per cent per year for the next 15 years. In addition, it seeks to

- Ensure that the continent achieves agreed on international development goals;
- Increase investment in human resource development;
- Promote the role of women in all economic activities;
- Promote sub-regional and continental economic integration;
- Develop a new partnership with industrialized countries and multilateral organizations on the basis of mutual commitments, obligations, interests, contributions and benefits;
- Strengthen Africa's capacity to lead development and to improve coordination with development partners;
- Ensure a capacity to lead negotiations on behalf of the continent on major development programs that require coordination at a continental level; and
- Ensure a capacity to accelerate implementation of major regional development cooperation agreements and projects already approved or in the pipeline.

On trade, NEPAD advocates a number of areas where Africa should focus its efforts. These include

- Developing a best-practice framework for technical regulations that meets both the requirements of the WTO's Agreement on Tech-

nical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and the needs of Africa;

- Negotiating measures and agreements to facilitate market access for African products to the world market;
- Encouraging foreign direct investment;
- Strengthening country and sub-regional capacity to participate in trade negotiations;
- Implementing and complying with WTO Agreements; and
- Identifying and exploiting new trading opportunities that emerge from the evolving multilateral trading system.

NEPAD also urges African leaders to identify strategic areas of intervention and, together with the international community, strengthen the contribution of trade to the continent's recovery.

Implementation of NEPAD

An Implementation Committee that will be comprised of the five Heads of State that initiated NEPAD along with ten other country representatives (two from each African region) has been set up. The Implementation Committee will make decisions about programs and initiatives, including the sequencing of activities, and these decisions will be binding on participating countries. The Committee will also set up mechanisms for reviewing progress, monitoring compliance, and taking steps to address problems and delays in implementation.

NEPAD and Existing Development Initiatives

There are many overlapping initiatives and processes in existence (*e.g.*, the UN Millennium Declaration, the G-8 Okinawa Declaration, the Copenhagen Declaration, the Skagen Declaration, the Cotonou Agreement, the EU-Cairo Plan of Action, the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), and the Sino-Africa Process, among others). NEPAD will establish linkages and explore synergies with these initiatives.

NEPAD provides the focal point and the overall strategic framework for engagement as Africa's

chosen agenda for development. Such engagement also includes aligning NEPAD with work being done within regional agreements such as the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA).

NEPAD in the News

NEPAD is receiving high-level support from WTO Director-General Mike Moore and key Western leaders, including French President Jacques Chirac and British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

WTO Director-General Moore said that NEPAD complemented the WTO's new round of trade negotiations launched in Doha, Qatar last November, and Doha's capacity-building mandate for developing countries.

France and Britain also recently agreed to coordinate their Africa policies and will promote NEPAD at the next G-8 Summit in Kananaskis, Canada June 26-27. Leaders from 13 African countries met in Paris with French President Chirac on February 8 to advance NEPAD.

In addition, British Prime Minister Tony Blair promoted the plan during his early February tour of four African countries. Speaking in Lagos, Nigeria on February 7, Blair said, "this is the best chance in a generation for us to make the partnership work. There is a generation of African leaders who are prepared to say 'it's our responsibility'". Earlier in the month, Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien told the World Economic Forum that his country would set aside a US\$ 500 million fund for NEPAD.

Outlook

President Bush recently invited President Jose Eduardo dos Santos of Angola, President Joaquim Alberto Chissano of Mozambique, and President Festus Gontebonye Mogae of Botswana to meet with him at the White House on February 26. Two of these leaders (Chissano of Mozambique and Mogae of Botswana) have been actively involved in NEPAD. It is likely that in addition to the issues President Bush will discuss with these leaders—political stability and security, trade and economic development, poverty reduction, and HIV/AIDS—the African leaders may seek the President's support for NEPAD.

In addition, NEPAD will be a key topic at the following critical events scheduled for 2002:

- The Financing for Development Conference in Mexico in March
- The G-8 Summit in Canada in June
- The African Union Summit in South Africa in July
- The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg in September